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1787. THE BAPTISTS OF TRENTON. 1867.

AN

Historical Discourse,

DELIVERED AT THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

OCTOBER 6th. 1867.

BY

D. HENRY MILLER, D.D.,

PASTOR.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE CHURCH.

TRENTON, N. J.:

PRINTED AT THE TRUE AMERICAN OFFICE.

1867.

1881 THE BAPTIST OF NEWTON 1881

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Historical Institution

NEWTON, MASS.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH

NEWTON, MASS.

BY REV. J. W. BROWN

NEWTON

PRINTED BY THE NEWTON PRESS

THE NEWTON

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TO THE

First Baptist Church and Congregation, of Trenton, N. J.,

whose kindness during my pastorate I cannot repay,

save by these acknowledgments and an affec-

tion that will never change, this

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

the chief value of which lies in the records it brings together,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR

PASTOR.

DISCOURSE.

“Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof.”

“Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.”

“For this God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death.”—PSALM XLVIII.:—12, 13, 14

The captivity of Judah God had turned. His judgments he had poured out upon her oppressors, who, whilst marching to conflict and to spoil, fell out among themselves. At first, the strife was between Ammon and Moab on the one side, and Edom on the other; but quickly it spread through all the ranks, and each man used his sword against his fellow, without any respect to tribe, and as soon, the whole army of invaders and oppressors was wasted. The Hebrews, who had looked on with astonishment, gathered up the spoils. For three days they were thus employed; on the fourth day they assembled and offered general thanksgiving to God, after which “they returned, every man of Judah, to Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the fore front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the

Lord.” We cannot wonder at the inspiration of the hour as the favored of the Lord returned, a delivered people, that on beholding their loved Jerusalem they should cry out, “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion.” “Let the daughters of Judah be glad.” “Walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof;” that is, mark her beauty, behold her grandeur, and count her defences. “Mark well her bulwarks,” her fortifications, and her visible strength, “that ye may tell it to the generation following.” “This God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death.”

After more than half a century, we stand to-day, with the gathered incidents of history and experience, to “count the towers” of our Zion, to mark the paths of our fathers, and the continued blessings of our father’s God upon their children, through all the snares and difficulties attending a life experience, in faith and hope, in toil and sacrifice. The labor and offering of this hour is simply to embalm the memories of the past, and “to tell the generation following” facts, in trials and triumphs, which should never be forgotten.

If, in this historic tribute, I should seem, to any, to be too minute in the use of names, or places, or dates, or incidents, it will be borne in mind I aim to give a *truthful* history of the Baptist cause in Trenton, not for the glory of one Church, or one Minister, or to perpetuate the achievements of one epoch, but to review the whole history and experience of a cause dear to our hearts, and, as far as we may, to recall the names and memories of those, who, though differing from us in many things, and holding views on some points of doctrine we cannot endorse, nevertheless did battle nobly for our cause, and did achieve results grand in *fact*, and as powerful

in their *influence*. To give an "historic discourse" on this subject, and to shut out the mention of ACTS, noble and generous and true, and to fail to introduce the ACTORS, would make such a discourse like the fig tree the Master found at the way-side, fair to look upon, all leaves, but destitute of fruit.

In the month of November, 1745, what is now known as the Baptist Church, at Hightstown, New Jersey, was organized, with twelve members. Its first Pastor was Rev. J. Carman, who was also one of its constituent members. Its second Pastor was Rev. Peter Wilson, who was baptized May 1st, 1776, and was ordained to the work of the Ministry May 1st, 1782. He remained pastor until 1816. To this church, and its laborious pastor, we trace the rise of the Baptist Cause in Trenton. Like his Lord, this minister of Christ "went about doing good." In 1785 he is found at Nottingham Square, establishing an outpost of labor, with a house of worship, although no Church was constituted there until April, 1812. From a minute furnished by Deacon William Tindall, of Hightstown, in the year 1803, we gather the following interesting facts:—"In the year 1787 the Rev. Peter Wilson, A. M., our beloved Pastor, began preaching in Trenton and its vicinity. His services appeared at first unwelcome, but they became more approved as his visits were repeated; several of his hearers began to feel serious concern for their everlasting safety. On the 4th of March, 1788, five persons, confessing their sins, submitted to the solemn ordinance of Christian Baptism in the Delaware, when the surrounding ice was so strong as to bear a large congregation of spectators." Onward, with each visitation, the good work seemed to progress. Success attended his labors

of love, and many friends were raised up to help the infant enterprise. Early in the year 1801, Colonel Peter Hunt, of Lamberton, presented to the Baptist friends a lot of ground on which to build a Meeting-House. On the 2d of May, the same year, Trustees were appointed, to hold the gift in trust, and to solicit donations, and to superintend the work. A *Society* was organized of the members resident, who were members mostly of the Church at Hightstown. To the gifts and offerings of those devoted men and women, many, connected with other religious denominations in this city at that time, "united their liberal subscriptions." The Trustees, at length, reported that they had so far succeeded in their appointment as to have the building ready for public worship. It will be observed that the first Board of Trustees appointed for this interest had full charge and did the labor pertaining to the secular—the financial affairs of the Society. Thus it should ever remain. In searching over an old file of papers, published in 1803, I found the following notice:—

"On Saturday next, the 26th instant, about twelve o'clock, the *Baptist Meeting-House*, between Trenton and Lamberton, will be opened for worship, and a Sermon delivered, suitable to the occasion, by the Rev. Dr. W. Stoughton, of Burlington. A number of other brethren in the vicinity are expected to attend, and the Communion of the Lord's Supper will be administered on the Lord's Day following when a public collection will be made toward completing said house."

This brings us, in our history, up to the 26th and 27th days of November, 1803. At the opening of the house of worship on Saturday, Dr. Stoughton preached from I. Kings, 8th: 27:—"But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" On Sunday, the 27th, he discoursed from the 84th Psalm, and

10th verse:—"I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." These discourses were "published by request of the Church," at Hightstown, of which this was then only a branch. I have in my possession these sermons—memorials, alike, of the dedication of your first house of worship—and also of the eloquent preacher of the occasion, long since numbered with the dead, of whom we must say, *though dead, he "yet speaketh."* For about three years, services were held at the Trenton and Lamberton Meeting-House by Rev. Mr. Wilson, and occasional supplies, as the people could command them. This was found, however, not to be the most successful method of building up the interests of the Baptist Church in this region. It was agreed to form a Church, to be known as the "Trenton and Lamberton Baptist Church." On the 9th of November, 1805, forty-eight persons constituted themselves into a Church of Christ. Of their recognition by Council we have no other record than, that the Church was admitted a member of the "Philadelphia Baptist Association." It so remained until the year 1811, when the New Jersey Baptist Association was formed, and this Church became one of the constituent members, which relation is still maintained,—the growth of the Baptists in the State having compelled the prefixing of the word "West" to the name of the Association. We do not wonder that the Church refused so positively to break away from this body, a year or two since, when urged so to do by some, whose sole aim seemed to be to remove "the ancient landmarks."

The first Deacons chosen were Amos Reeder and John Welling. As these brethren resided a considerable distance from the place, John Sunderland and Robert Howell were

elected as "Assistant Deacons." The following persons were elected as Trustees:—John Blakely, John Welling, James I. Wilson, Amos Reeder, Jesse Coleman, Nathan Coombs, and Benjamin Coles. The next step was to supply the pulpit with a preacher. The Rev. Peter Wilson was invited for one year "to visit the Church on sacramental seasons as administrator, and, as often as consistent, as our minister, to go in and out before the Church as stated supply." In respect to salary for these services, I find the following record:—"Intending, for his works of faith and labors of love, to render him (Rev. Mr. Wilson) some compensation, at the expiration of the time (one year), by subscription." Mr. Wilson accepted the "call," and was found at his post every communion season, which, by vote, was established to occur "on the second Lord's Day in January, March, May, July, September and November." A preparatory sermon was always preached on the Saturday evening preceding each sacramental season. A good old custom this, but for some cause, unknown to your speaker, allowed within a few years to become obsolete.

This Church early exhibited a deep interest in the subject of public praise, singing in the Sanctuary, and established the office of "Clerk to sing," whose duty it was, facing the whole congregation, to "set the tunes." I apprehend this was an office without a salary, as was that of the Sextonship of this Church, from 1805 to 1807. Amos Hart was elected "Clerk to sing," and Joseph Parker to the office of Sexton. In 1807 Mr. Parker resigned his office, and Richard Palmer having consented to serve as his successor, "it was mutually agreed that he should receive eight dollars per year" for his services. I refer to these particulars, that the membership of

the present, and the office-holders of the Church of to-day, may fully appreciate the labors of the fathers in the planting of "this vine," so fruitful and so rich in blessings to the generations which have followed.

In March, 1807, Benjamin Coles, one of the constituent members of the Church, was licensed to preach the Gospel. Mr. Wilson being pastor at Hightstown, and continuing service at "the Square," could supply the Church but once a month. Mr. Coles, just licensed by the Church, was invited to supply once a month. This continued until 1809. In the month of July, 1808, the Rev. William Boswell was invited to supply once a month, also; so that in the Summer of that year the pulpit was occupied by these three brethren, alternately. In May, 1809, Mr. Boswell was called as pastor for one year, "in conjunction with the Second Hopewell Church." On the 6th of September he was ordained to the work of the Ministry, the Rev. Burgess Allison, D. D.,—the life-long friend of Mr. Boswell,—the Rev. James McLaughlin, Rev. Peter Wilson, and the Rev. Mr. Harris, of the Presbyterian Church, officiating. From that time until 1823, Mr. Boswell continued to serve as Pastor, "preaching, at first, half, and afterwards the whole of the time, for them." During Mr. Boswell's ministry the Church increased from sixty-nine to two hundred and twenty-two,—he having baptized one hundred and eighty-seven persons. During the latter part of the year 1822 and the early part of 1823, an evident change took place in Mr. Boswell's views of what was then styled "Calvinism and Church Order." This caused great uneasiness, and led to the calling of a Council of Clergymen. On the 12th of April the Revs. Henry Smalley, John Boggs, Thomas B. Montanye, and James McLaughlin, were invited

on said Council. But three of those invited were present at the Council, which convened on the 30th of May. They listened to the charges against the Pastor, and after retiring for consultation,—and, we trust, for prayer,—they offered the following report to the Church :—

“ We, the undersigned, having heard the unhappy division between the Baptist Church of Trenton and Lamberton and their Elder, William Boswell, are of opinion that he has departed from the faith of the *particular* Baptist Churches in our connection,—the proof of which has been fully witnessed. Though the Committee lament the fact, the love they feel for the faith once delivered to the saints, and the preservation of the Church of Jesus Christ from error, demands that he be immediately notified that until he renounces his errors he cannot have our fellowship as a regular Gospel Minister.

“ Signed,

JOHN BOGGS,

HENRY SMALLEY,

THOS. B. MONTANYE.”

The Church speedily acted on the report, and without waiting the effect of the doings of the Council on the mind of Mr. Boswell, immediately excluded him from fellowship. This act of separation was truly painful;—painful to the flock he had served, and equally so to himself. I find him, in his farewell address to the Church, in which he gives a full statement of his views, saying :—“ I had fondly hoped that nothing but death could ever separate us ; but it seems as if Divine Providence has ordered otherwise. The time has now arrived that will perhaps dissolve that near and dear relation which has for many years mutually bound us together in Christian fellowship.” * * * “ I am acting in accordance with the dictates of conscience, and cannot

consistently support *every article* of the printed 'confession of faith' adopted by the New Jersey Baptist Association."

* * * "You will perceive that my views are not in conformity with the Calvinistic principles." * * * "I am not led by any private or ambitious views whatever, being in the wane of life, and dying daily to worldly interest and honor. All my former trials whilst laboring for you, in season and out of season, bear no comparison to what I feel now; to leave a people with whom I have been sixteen years united in the sacred bonds of Christian love; to be separated from many of my children in the Gospel, who have been as dear to me as my life." It is an easy matter to brand a man with "heresy," and full as easy, according to our form of government, to exclude from fellowship such an one; but not so easy to heal the wounds occasioned by too precipitate an act of excision. This was fully shown in what followed. Sixty persons, embracing some of the most devoted, liberal, and self-sacrificing members of the Church, went out with the pastor, declaring that they sympathized with his views on Calvinism and Communion. And these were excluded also. A few afterwards returned to the Church, making acknowledgment of error, and were restored to fellowship.

Mr. Boswell and his party organized a Church; they *did not* take the name of the "Second Baptist Church," as you have recently seen it stated. Mr. Boswell knew that the Church could not be recognized by regular Baptists, and for that reason sought recognition from another sect. For a long time this new organization went by the name of the "Boswell Church." They built a house of worship in Bloomsbury, now known as the Second Presbyterian Church, in Union street, in this city. The Rev. Dr. John Hall says, in his

History, that it was built in eleven weeks, and was dedicated October 19, 1823. This name was changed, however, on the issuing of a hymn-book by the Pastor; and ever after, until the death of Mr. Boswell and the sale of the property, this Church was known as the "Reformed General Baptist Church, of Bloomsbury, New Jersey." These were dark days to the First Church of Trenton; but the day following the Council the Rev. Mr. McLaughlin came with words of comfort and encouragement. He remained for six weeks, preaching, counseling, and inspiring hope, thus, at the very time to save the existence of the old Church, the Master sent the faithful watchman and gave him success in his mission.

While we all regret the departure of Mr. Boswell from the accepted tenets of the Baptist Church, we would be false to history, false to ourselves, false to his memory, were we to say less, than that he did a noble work for the Baptist cause, in Trenton and vicinity, while in fellowship with the Association. I cannot suffer the present occasion to pass without doing justice to the memory of your first settled pastor. As but little is known of Mr. Boswell by the present generation, only that he led a colony and formed a new Church, differing from the regular Baptists, it may be acceptable to perpetuate a fuller sketch of the man and his work. His mistake was a painful one; his views of doctrine and Church order, though erroneous, should not subject his name and memory to the misrepresentations of any. To all who write of him, who speak of him, is the advice of Shakespeare most timely:—

“To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Rev. William Boswell was born in the City of Philadelphia on the 8th day of January, 1776. His parents belonged to the Society of Friends, or Quakers. They came from Essex County, England, and settled in this country a short time previous to the Revolutionary War. After a residence of about twenty years in this country they died in the City of Philadelphia, and were buried in the Quaker grave-yard, corner of Fourth and Arch streets. Being in moderate circumstances, and the opportunities of education at that early period very difficult to obtain, the subject of this sketch received only a few quarters of ordinary schooling, consequently was compelled to struggle against the many adversities incident thereto; yet, by dint of application, much self-sacrifice, and a constant devotion to the sacred Scriptures and such useful books as he was able to obtain, was enabled to make an honorable and genteel appearance in the world, as well as a useful and eloquent Minister of the Gospel of Christ.

In youth he was moral, and distinguished for his conscientiousness, and though religiously inclined, did not make a profession of piety until the year 1804, when he became a member of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, under the Pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, and from whom he received much spiritual aid in the commencement of his ministry.

In the month of March, 1805, he removed to Burlington, New Jersey, where, after a brief residence, he was licensed to preach, which he did, as the fruits of his labors testify, with considerable success.

In the year 1809, as already noticed, he was ordained as pastor of the Trenton and Lamberton Baptist Church. He died on the 11th day of June, 1833, being fifty-seven years,

five months and three days old. He preached to his devoted flock even to the close of his life. On the Sabbath previous to his death he delivered his last message, founded on Proverbs, vi., 6:—“*Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise.*”

His ministrations were attended with the Divine blessing, having baptized upwards of four hundred persons,—the ordinance of baptism, at that time, being administered in the Delaware River, and frequently, at a convenient place in the waters flowing just in the rear of the building known as “Temperance Hall.” Some of the converts are yet alive to emulate his many virtues, and to speak of his eloquence and power, and to rehearse his earnest entreaties to sinners to receive the Grace of Jesus Christ. A gentleman well qualified to speak has written to me as follows:—

“Mr. Boswell was a pleasant and attractive speaker; especially did he excel as a sympathizer with the afflicted. He was popular with the young, and during his ministry united several hundred couple in the bonds of matrimony; and what was peculiar for a ‘hireling minister,’ many of them were the sons and daughters of Quakers.”

For several years Mr. Boswell was appointed by the Legislature to fill the position of State Librarian, which seemed fitting, indeed, to his age and his fondness for books. The salary of the State Librarian was not then what it is now, or you may rest assured no Baptist, if indeed any Clergyman, could have received the appointment. He was also appointed by the State Chaplain to the “New Jersey State Penitentiary,” where, in the regular and faithful discharge of his duties, his voice was heard stirring the hearts of the two hundred convicts then incarcerated. A friend from Long Island has furnished the following sketch and facts:—

“In person Mr. Boswell was graceful, well-formed, and his countenance remarkably expressive of sensibility, cheerfulness and dignity ; his social virtues, eminent patriotism, and ardent zeal in the cause of Christianity are registered in many hearts. When the New Jersey troops, in the War of 1812, were encamped at Sandy Hook, daily expecting the landing of British troops, then hovering on the coast, Mr. Boswell visited, comforted, and preached the Gospel of Christ to them, directing attention to ‘the Captain of our salvation.’ ”

“About this time, party strife ran high, and all classes of men took sides, and so bitter was the conflict that the Federalists and Democrats were unwilling even to celebrate the Fourth of July together, and, as an acceptable speaker and a friend of the Jeffersonian policy in regard to the war, Mr. Boswell was called upon to deliver an oration, which was published, and greatly eulogized for its expressions of patriotism and devotion to country.”

Mr. Boswell was greatly beloved by all, but especially by his own flock. A fact or two of the people who claimed him as pastor may not be uninteresting to us of to-day, or to the generation following ; it is possible a gentle reminder may be involved respecting the duty of the flock to the shepherd :—

“There seemed to exist at that age special care for the creature comforts of the *minister*. In his case, the male portion of his congregation residing in the rural districts would unite in the autumn of each year, and bring to his door, cords of fine hickory and oak wood, sufficient to last until the next autumn. Then, again, during the winter, poultry and other farm products, came in abundance, and the women of the parish were not a whit behind in their offerings of affection. In the season of fishing the owners of fisheries on the Delaware always calculated for a generous remembrance of ‘the Elder.’ ”

A custom which your pastor of to-day has reason to be thankful has not passed away.

From what has been said it is clearly evident the first pastor of this Church was no ordinary man, in the pulpit, in the esteem of the State, in social life, in the affections of his people, in the Baptist denomination. His name will ever live as one of the founders of the "American Baptist Missionary Union," though now bearing the new name, as it gives the Gospel to the world.

The agitation occasioned by the division in the Church soon subsided, and we find the flock of God in this place moving gloriously onward. Returning to the history of the Church, it is recorded that Thomas Potts was unanimously chosen Deacon, July 13th, 1816. About this time the Deacons were assigned a given seat in the house of worship, as is evident from the following resolution :—

"*Resolved*, That our Deacons, Potts, Reeder and Welling, together with Brethren McKean, Probasco and Hutchinson, be invited by the Clerk to take seats *under the pulpit*, and attend to regulating the singing and reading the lines."

The custom then obtaining of lining out the hymn as it was sung, hymn-books being scarce.

In July, 1823, we find a record that the Church was deprived by death of their aged and highly esteemed sister, HANNAH KEEN, in the eighty-eighth year of her age. A mother in Israel, familiarly called the "Trenton Deacon." It was at her house, when she resided in Lamberton, that the first Baptist sermon known ever to have been preached in this vicinity, was delivered by the Rev. Peter Wilson.

From the time that Mr. Boswell left the Church, until January, 1826, the Church depended upon supplies for the preaching of the Word. For two years the Rev. James E. Welch, yet living, in the enjoyment of a ripe old age, regularly filled

an appointment, riding from Mount Holly every other Sabbath, to meet his engagement, for which he received seventy-five dollars per annum—and with so much acceptability to the Church, that at a Church meeting held on Saturday, January 7, 1826, a vote of thanks was tendered, accompanied with twelve dollars, payment in full for services rendered. I have in my possession the original letter presented to Mr. Welch, signed by Gershom Mott, David Brister, Martin Mull, and George Lanning, "Committee on Supplies."

In November, 1823, the Rev. Samuel W. Lynd was called as pastor. He accepted the invitation, but shortly after tendered a letter of resignation, without having entered upon the duties of the pastorate.

In January, 1826, the Rev. Dr. Patterson settled as pastor over this church. He remained until March, 1828, when he resigned, and removed to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he resided until December, 1831, when he departed this life, in the blissful hope of eternal glory. His last words were, "My evidences are right; all's well; all's peace." During his stay in Trenton, Dr. Patterson, by his genial spirit, his earnest piety, his sterling integrity of character, made hosts of friends, and in the Church, especially, left a name which shall be repeated to the generations following, ever fresh and fragrant.

The Church was again supplied by different Ministers until April, 1830, when the Rev. Morgan J. Rhees took charge of the church for half of the time, preaching for the Bordentown Church the other half. This continued until the 1st of April, 1834, when he devoted his whole time to this Church. In November, 1840, he resigned the pastorate, and became Secretary of the "American Baptist Publication and Sunday

School Society," at the same time removing to Philadelphia. This pastorate embraces a period of ten years and seven months, during which there were added to the church, by baptism, two hundred and thirty-one members. Mr. Rhees was educated for the legal profession, and was eminently successful at the bar, which he left only from the strongest convictions of duty, that he might, in preaching the Gospel of Christ, "win souls." He was greatly beloved by the church and deservedly esteemed by all denominations of Christians. He was a leader fearless in his work, faithful in the ministry of the word; but especially was he known outside of his own church by his devotion to the "temperance reformation," which, during those years, so widely and so thoroughly agitated all parts of our country. During his Ministry in this city, he experienced great embarrassment in reaching a class of hearers he much desired; this difficulty arising from the location of the church edifice in the southern part of the city, sparsely populated, far removed from the thrift and throb of business life. To meet the necessity, he went to the people with the Gospel. The old State Bank building on Warren street was secured, and there, a portion of each Sabbath, did this man of God unfold the "riches of Christ." This was a time when the Baptists should have secured building lots, and, like other denominations, had a church established in the heart of the city. The neglect to do this proved only the wasting of effort and the sacrifice of a golden opportunity. The name of Morgan J. Rhees will never die. He fell "asleep in Jesus" a few years ago, while serving, as pastor, the First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, Long Island. At the time of his death he was Recording Secretary of the "American Baptist Missionary Union."

In January, 1831, George Lanning, Gershom Mott, David Brister, and Martin Mull, were chosen Deacons of the Church. In November, 1834, the aged and beloved Deacon John Wel-ling departed this life. A good man, a *faithful Deacon*, a living Christian, the Church mourned his death. After the removal of Mr. Rhees the Church was destitute of a leader for one year, when, in October, 1841, the Rev. Luther F. Beecher was invited to become pastor. He accepted the call, and on the 28th of the same month was ordained to the work of the ministry, Revs. J. E. Welch, John C. Harrison, C. W. Mulford, E. W. Dickerson, Levi G. Beck, Serin Stites and Joseph Hammitt assisting in the services. Mr. Beecher remained but one year pastor of the church, yet, during that year was abundant in labors. Aside from his regular services here, he held meetings in a room on the corner of State and Greene streets, over the store now occupied by Mr. Scott, and, like his predecessor, at that day saw the necessity of a Baptist Church in a central location. He was a popular preacher, and drew large congregations to hear the Word. During the year he served the church he baptized forty-nine rejoicing converts.

From October, 1842, the church was supplied by Rev. Thomas Wilks, and others, until February, 1843, when the Rev. John Young was called as pastor. He remained so from the 15th of February to the 15th of August, a space of six months. Directly after his settlement, a difficulty arose respecting the Moderatorship of the church meetings. Mr. Young claimed it as his right to preside, as pastor of the church. There were some who thought differently from this, and argued that an election should take place at each church meeting as to who should preside. Mr. Young also took ex-

ception to the manner of examining and receiving candidates for baptism and church membership. The result was, *two parties*. This feeling increased so rapidly, and became so intensified, that on the 31st of July, at a special church meeting convened for the purpose, he resigned the charge of the church, to take effect on the 15th of August, when his six months would expire. In his letter of resignation he wrote as follows:—"No creed, no code of discipline, or test of communion, or ecclesiastical bond or civil law, have I ever used in any church of which I have yet been pastor, and none will I ever sanction till I ascend to meet my God at the judgment." The church accepted his resignation, and on the next Sabbath he preached a sermon in which his views were more particularly set forth. This added to the excitement which before existed, and which resulted finally in a sad division. Mr. Young was a fine preacher, a strong thinker, and peculiarly independent in his notions. He made many friends throughout the community. As soon, therefore, as it was known that there existed a difficulty between Mr. Young and "some of the Deacons and members of the Church," and that he proposed leaving the city, "an unusually large and crowded audience" assembled at the City Hall, in Trenton, on the Tuesday evening following the delivery of the discourse already referred to,—August 8th, 1843. David Brister was called to the Chair, and F. S. Mills, Esq., was appointed Secretary. William Boswell, son of the former pastor, Benjamin Moorhouse, George Wilson, James Erwin and F. S. Mills were appointed a committee to report a series of resolutions as expressive of that meeting. Mr. Young was asked to stay in Trenton, and pledges were made him of support. The enthusiasm of the hour had its effect, and on the 2d day

of September *one hundred and twenty-three* (not *eighty-five*, as you find it in a certain "historic" statement,) members were dismissed to form the *Second Baptist Church* in Trenton. Among the number was Deacon David Brister. In 1844 thirty-five of these members returned, and were again received into the fellowship of the church. Deacon Brister was one of the returning members.

Owing to these dissensions, the church was greatly reduced in membership, efficiency and resources, but soon peace and harmony were restored. The membership of the church was reduced from *three hundred and eighteen* on the roll at the time Mr. Young took charge, in February, 1843, to *two hundred and eleven* in the September following, although twenty-seven persons had been baptized during that time.

This colony formed the *Second Baptist Church*, and was recognized by a Council as orthodox as Baptist Churches usually convene. It embraced such men as George B. Ide, J. Lansing Burrows, and the endorsement of the venerable and justly esteemed, though now sainted Spencer H. Cone and Joseph H. Kennard, whose letter on the subject I have in my possession. This colony built the edifice now occupied by the Baptist Church, on the corner of Hanover and Montgomery streets, in this city. The building has been recently enlarged and beautified by adding length and breadth to the south end, the structure being, in general appearance, very much improved. This church edifice was erected, if ever building was, through the most patient and persevering toil of faithful, devoted men and women. They boasted, nor could they, of but little of this world's goods, yet they set an example which might be profitably imitated by their descendants of to-day—giving of their little until they felt what they gave, and so consecrated their benefactions in *sacrifice*.

During the erection of the building, worship was held in the "City Hall," as is evident from the following extract from the minutes of the Common Council, held October 2d, 1843:

"A petition from a number of members of the Baptist Church, praying the use of the City Hall for holding meetings therein for the space of four months.

"On motion, the prayer of the petitioners was granted, with provision that all the necessary expenses of fuel, light, attendance, etc., be borne by the applicants."

This minute is introduced to show that the colony dismissed from the "Mother Church" was organized into a church within a month after the separation, and with a location and shelter at the generosity of the city government. These were days and nights of toil and trial to the pastor and members of this young church. Worship was maintained at the City Hall until the completion of their new church building, which was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God on Thursday, November 28th, 1844, the Rev. J. Lansing Burrows preaching in the afternoon, and the Rev. George B. Ide in the evening.

Mr. Young's independence of character, coupled with his peculiar views of *creeds* and church *order*, made him the subject of suspicion and distrust with many of his brethren in the ministry, and owing to this fact, more than to any other, the Second Baptist Church in this city did not, at that time, receive the fostering care it should, from the State Convention. The *Church was orthodox*, though its pastor may not have been so considered. To a lack of help in its infancy, after the most worthy and earnest efforts for a successful life, may be traced the ills and sorrows which followed for years, and which the State Convention so heartily labored to wipe

out, by liberal appropriations, at a later date, and in which effort it has been so successful.

The ministry of Mr. Young continued for about two years, at a salary of four hundred dollars a year. During this time harmony prevailed, and his labors were most acceptable. I have a letter from Mr. Young to the church, in which he says, from pecuniary considerations alone, "it will be my duty to leave this place on the first of April next. This conclusion is painful, from the strong affection I have for you as a people, the sacrifices and difficulties already endured in this cause, and the prospect now opening of a more favorable hearing for our principles by the neighboring churches." Thus, it will appear, Mr. Young left the Second Baptist Church in harmony, and if it "broke into three parts," as you have been told, it was not because of the heresy of John Young more than of the hyper-orthodoxy of some who followed him. The Second Baptist Church did not *break*, was not scattered, until under the *third* minister who followed Mr. Young. It certainly bears the aspect of vindictiveness to make him the scapegoat of what did not occur until September, 1851. Indeed, no well-informed person respecting the history of the Baptist cause in this city, will attempt to controvert this statement.

I am indebted to Rev. Dr. Hall, of Trenton, and others, for facts and dates bearing on this period. After Mr. Young's departure from New Jersey, he went to the "West," and united himself with the people known as "Disciples"—which step confirmed the convictions of many who believed him heretical in his theological tenets. The Second Baptist Church called to the pastorate the Rev. Joshua Fletcher, a man of large experience, who had served the Baptist Church

at Saratoga Springs nearly nineteen years. He was invited in 1847. In April he was on the field at work. In his letter of acceptance he wrote, respecting his support, as follows :— “ If I settle with a people, I expect to live in as good style, and in as comfortable circumstances, as they live. I do not desire to live above my people ; neither would I be willing to live below them.” As might have been expected, a man like Mr. Fletcher, with such positive views of *right* and *justice*, of *equality* and *dignity*, did not find all that consideration on the one hand that he had a right to expect, nor that pecuniary ability on the other to meet his demands which he wished ; he therefore labored little more than a year as pastor. During that time a feeling of dissension arose in the church respecting Mr. Fletcher and his treatment of several members of the body. Whether Mr. Fletcher was right or wrong, is not our province to decide ; but the feeling continued to increase even after he left the place. He brought letters of membership from Saratoga, for himself and wife, and only after severe opposition were letters granted him when he left Trenton. Mr. Fletcher was faithful in his preaching, and abundant in his labors, visiting Flemington and other places, as he had opportunity, for days at a time, to preach the Gospel ; yet did he fail to please and secure harmony in the Second Church. His is not the only case where the faithful laborer has been left unrequited.

In September, 1848, the Rev. Leonard L. Fletcher, brother of the late pastor, brought a letter of membership from the Keesville Baptist Church, and supplied the Second Church until early in the year 1849, when he was regularly dismissed. He became pastor of a church in Georgia, where he died. His name is spoken with kindly utterances by many who knew him during his brief stay in Trenton.

September 3d, 1849, the Rev. Joseph Hammitt was invited to become pastor of the *Second Baptist Church*. On the 9th of the same month he read to the church his letter of acceptance. It is too long to introduce at this period: suffice it to say, I have read it carefully, and find it pre-eminently worthy of the man. A difficulty had existed between the old church and the Second, which had so greatly augmented in its proportions that the churches declined to correspond with each other. At the instance of Mr. Hammitt, a series of resolutions were passed by the Second Church, asking for a committee from the "Mother Church," to adjust the difficulty, and henceforth to labor in harmony for the Master's cause.

On the 31st day of May, 1850, at a meeting of the joint committees of both churches, held at the house of Mr. J. G. Coleman, it was resolved "that the difficulty between the two churches has been satisfactorily adjusted, and that correspondence between the two be re-opened." Signed on behalf of the Trenton and Lamberton Church, by Martin Mull, Jas. G. Coleman, James Howell, William Johnson and John Q. Carman; on behalf of the Second Baptist Church by Rev. Joseph Hammitt, G. W. Albertson, John M. Howell, James H. Smith and David Clark.

Up to this period we find no indication of heresy in the church; indeed, the facts of history prove the orthodoxy of the *Second Church* from its organization. "Benedict's History of the Baptists" appearing about this time, represented the Second Baptist Church as having been constituted upon open communion principles, to the injury of the Church, and its standing with the sisterhood of Churches. In its defence, therefore, on the 27th of May, 1850, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

“*Resolved*, That this Church was constituted September 11th, 1843, upon the established principles of Regular Baptist Churches, and in no instance whatever have we departed from that cardinal doctrine, of baptism by immersion being a pre-requisite to communion at the Lord’s Table.

“*Resolved*, That we still declare our unwavering attachment to the Bible truths as set forth in the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith, which was adopted by us at our constitution.

“JOSEPH HAMMITT, *Pastor*,

“DAVID CLARK, *Church Clerk*.”

We have been rejoiced to put our hands on these official documents, if for no other purpose, in vindicating the *early faith* of the Second Church, to reprove those mushroom defamers whose scent and cry has been “heresy!” “heresy!”

In 1851, Captain Lewis Parker, John Whitehead, N. Holmes, William McKee, S. Smith, J. Hammitt and George Sweet, were elected to serve as Trustees of the Second Baptist Church. This election occurred on the 31st of March, 1851, at which time we find the body *unbroken*, and comparative unity existing. Between the months of March and September, however, a dissatisfaction with the pastor was manifested, and his removal agitated. This immediately caused two parties—those seeking a change in the pastorate, and those opposed thereto.

This affair ripened rapidly into a distinct and fixed result, neither party showing a willingness to yield, the pastor being determined to remain. On the evening of September 1st, 1851, he presided at the church meeting, and read the letter he had prepared by vote of the church for the approaching meeting of the Association, which was accepted. He then presented his resignation as pastor, “to take effect from that date,” stating that he “released himself from all the obliga-

tions and duties of their pastor." He then presented the names of twenty-six persons asking for letters of dismission. The communication was laid on the table for future consideration. This vote was no sooner taken than Rev. Mr. Hammitt arose and presented the following declaration:—

"We, the undersigned, members of the Second Baptist Church of Trenton, N. J., having regularly and respectfully asked for our letters of dismission, which application you have not granted, we therefore wish it understood, from this time henceforth, we withdraw from you, having no fellowship with you as a Baptist Church."

Then followed the names of the twenty-six persons. Mr. Hammitt had, up to this point in the meeting, occupied the chair. On reading the letter of withdrawal he vacated the Chair and left the house, followed by the persons whose names he had read. It was just here that the Second Church "broke" into two parts, *not* into "three," and owing to the secession of its *third* minister, and not to "*suspicious that*" their first pastor "*was not a regular Baptist minister.*" Let us be true to history if we speak at all.

As soon as Mr. Hammitt and his friends had left the house the church meeting was re-organized, and George Albertson, whose body we have so recently laid to rest in our grave-yard—the devout Christian, the patient sufferer, "an Israelite in whom was no guile,"—being present at that memorable meeting, was elected Moderator. George Parker offered prayer for "that wisdom which cometh from above," and in the need of which that distracted fold now had such afflictive evidence.

With full faith, the church "voted to go forward," though greatly tried and weakened. John Whitehead, J. M. Howell and George Parker were appointed a committee to "supply

the church with ministers until otherwise ordered." The Second Church now found it absolutely necessary to have help from the Convention in order to support a pastor. By vote of the church, the excellent and devoted John Whitehead—a brother whose memory is dear to this church, now, we believe, sainted and joyful in the Paradise of God—went to the Convention, made a full statement of all the facts before the Board, and received the assurance that their application would be granted as "soon as the church should call a pastor."

In the interim, Mr. Hammitt and his party formed what is known in the history of this cause "The Trinity Baptist Church." If a high-sounding name could have afforded life, "Temperance Hall" would not have "proved to be their cradle and their coffin." Of the few left to bear the burdens of the Second Church, some gave evidence of *discouragement*, and asked for letters to the old church, thus, by removal, weakening those that remained. After much delay respecting the pastorate, during which time several others had left the church, a call was extended to Rev. John Berg,—James Robinson and William Gillingham serving as committee. This invitation was unanimous, and voted on the 8th of March, 1852. The church became hopeful that with Mr. Berg the "little one" would be able to maintain visibility, and still exert a churchly influence, and also to obtain the promised aid from the Convention. The church waited anxiously Mr. Berg's reply, from March until May, when the committee reported the "call declined;" then went out the light of hope for the life of the Second Baptist Church. Members now began to leave so rapidly that it was evident some provision must be made, or the property gathered through the noble

efforts of the Second Church would pass into other hands. That it was secured, a debt of gratitude is due to Captain Lewis Parker and other friends for *loans* in the time of need.

Mr. Hammitt and his party failing of that success which they had fondly anticipated, after recognition by Council, which was afforded in due season, and the Second Church holding the property, though unable to secure, and now *alone* to support a pastor, an overture was made to the State Convention to take the property, pay the floating debts, and reconstruct the Baptist element, and hold the property for the Baptist denomination. The Convention Board acceded to the proposal. The pastor of the "Trinity Baptist Church" meanwhile found it convenient to leave the field. Under the auspices of the Convention, on the 30th of April, 1853, the Central Baptist Church was organized, absorbing most of the members of the "Trinity" enterprise, and a few of those who remained of the Second Church. A Council was convened at the Meeting-house, and the organization perfected on Wednesday, the 10th of May, 1853. The letters calling this Council were signed by that venerable, justly esteemed, and devoted servant of God, Rev. G. S. Webb, whose life is yet prolonged, and who stands like a patriarch, pointing to the lessons of the past, yet, in the vigor of a manly piety, is obedient to the injunction, "occupy till I come." Thus was a fourth organization afforded to nearly the same parties in establishing a Second Baptist interest in the City of Trenton. The only feature of special note characterizing the present church in its abnegation of the Second interest, is found in the fact, that under the direction of Judge P. P. Runyan, of New Brunswick, one of the Trustees representing the State Convention, the metallic box, placed in the corner-stone at

the erection of the church edifice, which was said to contain heretical sentiments as uttered by Mr. Young, was taken out, and is now to be found in a bank vault, where its contents are not likely to be infectious.

The Apostles of the Baptist cause serving this *new* interest on the *old* field, some of them well and widely known throughout the denomination, are as follows, and in the order:—The Rev. Messrs. Wilcox, Wright, Darrow, Howlett, and the present pastor. Of Mr. Wright's pastoral labors, christian men and women in this city, of all denominations, speak favorably. His friends are many at the State Capital.

I have been thus explicit and careful, after the most minute research, in giving a sketch of the Second Church and its off-shoots, in order to perpetuate a truthful history of some of our struggles and trials as a denomination in this city. To-day we heartily bid God-speed to the Central Baptist Church, as maintaining our faith and enforcing the truth of the word of God. They enjoy the shelter of the tree planted by John Young and his associates, the Parkers, Whiteheads, Howells, Gillinghams, an Albertson, a Clark, McKee, Holmes, Temple, Robinson, James H. Smith and others, together with women-workers, good and true. The church is now prospering well, "Elder Knapp" having given it an impetus during the last winter, by weeks of prayer and preaching previously unknown to the body, the result of which was the baptism of more than one hundred rejoicing converts.

Let us now turn again to the "Old Church," greatly reduced and afflicted by Mr. Young's course of conduct and those who followed him. In February, 1844, the Rev. Levi G. Beck was invited to the pastorate, and entered upon its duties. He found the church somewhat divided, the congregation

small. Under his judicious management, unity was restored; the congregation increased, so that in a little time it was nearly if not quite as large as before the division. Mr. Beck resigned his charge October 1st, 1849, having baptized forty-six persons into the fellowship of the church.

Next came to your pulpit, January 1st, 1850, the devoted Christian, the elegant and scholarly preacher, Henry K. Green. The heavenly gift bestowed on him made him to this church, amid great personal trials—trials of a social and professional nature—an Apollos watering and affording culture and life-growth to the plants of righteousness as he found them in this garden, and as a faithful shepherd, he drew to the fold, in holy sacred baptism, fifty precious converts, who may each in grace shine as “a diadem in the hand of the Lord.” Mr. Green was not generally appreciated in this church, his style, and elegance, and learning, placing him far in the advance of the people he served. Here and there was found a true sympathizer, a congenial spirit, fully prizing the treasure of a preacher the church then possessed, and who, to no very limited extent, have been in mourning ever since his departure. He left Trenton January 1st, 1853. Mr. Green, after great suffering of body, passed to his rest and reward in the skies, a few years since. “The memory of the just is blessed.”

In the month of May, 1853, the venerable and devoted Duncan Dunbar became pastor. He was a man of considerable natural ability, extensive theological reading, and large experience. He was the friend of the poor, the counsellor of the afflicted, the earnest, plain preacher, the faithful pastor. He left the church in November, 1854, to return to his old field, in the bosom of old friends, in the City of New York,

being re-called to the McDougal Street Church. Mr. Dunbar fell "asleep in Jesus" three years ago, when, it will be remembered by most of you, this church held a memorial service, and a discourse on the life and character of your former pastor, was preached by W. H. Parmly, of Jersey City.

In December, 1854, you called to your pulpit, as Mr. Dunbar's successor, the truly pious Lewis Smith,—probably the most delicate and sensitive of all your pastors. His spirit was often grieved and wounded where no ripple would have disturbed the spirit of another. Mr. Smith was not just the man for the Trenton church. Too nervously sensitive, and if possible, too pious, always to be understood and to maintain pastoral rights. He closed his labors December 1st, 1857, having baptized forty-nine persons. He was greatly attached to the church, and, we are informed in his biography, "had no other object in breaking away from the ties that endeared him to this people, and entering upon a more arduous field, than the conviction that it was duty, and the hope of being more useful." We think of him to-day, as he last stood in this pulpit, whispering his "good-bye" word of counsel, a little while before he went down to the grave.

The Rev. F. Charlton came and supplied the pulpit for a brief time, during the year 1858. He baptized two persons.

On the 1st of October, 1858, the Rev. O. T. Walker having been invited, entered upon his ministry as pastor. He is so well known to you all, and has served you so recently, I need make no special reference to him as a *preacher*. During his ministry this beautiful edifice was erected, and was dedicated to the worship of God in August, 1860; sermons being delivered on the occasion by Rev. Thomas Armitage, D. D., Rev. Lewis Smith, and Rev. D. Henry Miller.

Mr. Walker resigned his pastorate September 1st, 1863, having baptized during his settlement in this city two hundred and twenty-seven persons. He did a good work for the Baptists of this city in securing the erection of the present house of worship.

In March, 1861, an application was made to the Legislature, asking the privilege of changing the name of the church from "The *Trenton* and Lamberton," to that of "The First Baptist Church of Trenton, New Jersey." The bill passed both Houses, and the church is now, so known in law. This, you will observe, occurred years after "South Trenton" was incorporated within the city limits; the "annexation" of Bloomsbury, or South Trenton, to the city proper, having no more to do in giving the name of "First" to this church than has "the calling of evil good or good evil," to make it so. This is the mother church, the *first in fact*, in *location*, in *history*, and *name*, associated with the Baptist cause of the City of Trenton. Let her children praise her and hold her name—the "First"—as belonging to her by no accident, but indeed hers as the "First" in "TRENTON and Lamberton." May they also hold dear that name as expressive of her enterprise and devotion in every good word and work. "Tell it to the generations following."

Early in September, 1863, the Rev. D. Henry Miller was invited to visit the church, in view of settling as pastor. At the time he was invited, he was serving his country as Chaplain in the Union Army, and was located near Portsmouth, Virginia, with the Fifteenth Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers. In October he was on the field. He preached morning and evening in this house, and under "the large tree" near the residence of W. M. Lenox, Esq., in the Sixth Ward,

in the afternoon, of his first Sabbath in Trenton. He was invited to become pastor, and entered upon his duties as such on the first of the following December. This much your speaker may be allowed to say, it has been a pleasant though laborious pastorate. It is hardly necessary to add, he does not know of a more pleasant field of labor or kinder people, in all the State of New Jersey. As this is my last Sabbath with you, and this discourse, in its historical value, is to perpetuate the facts and events of the *past* and *present*, as far as practicable, an extract from the last associational letter, prepared by W. I. Vannest, Esq., and approved by vote of the church, will be here introduced, as valuable to this history and the day, but especially of interest to those who may follow us. The letter says :—

“ We have been prospered both spiritually and temporally. The church has been strengthened and the congregation so increased that not an eligible pew is to be obtained in our beautiful church edifice. In view of these facts, our pastor proposed the formation of a new church by a colony from us, as a duty and necessity, and finally made it the turning point of his continuance with us, being willing to remain with the mother church or to go out with the new organization, but absolutely declining to remain as pastor of so large a church when there was such an inviting field to occupy in the city, and when the interests of the denomination demanded such enlargement and expansion. The proposal of the pastor was deferred, and to the surprise of the church, on the following Sabbath the pastor announced his intention to leave us, by reading his resignation. He has since accepted the Pastorship of the Broad Street Baptist Church in Elizabeth, N. J., and though too late to prevent his departure, we are happy to state that at our last regular church meeting a committee was appointed to consider the propriety of forming another Baptist Church in Trenton.

“ Dr. Miller has been pastor of our church four years, and we

take great pleasure in referring to the record of his ministry, believing his coming has been a blessing. During the first year, *fourteen* persons were added to the church; during the second, *seventy-one*; during the third, *ninety-four*; and during the fourth, *one hundred and twenty*; making a total of TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE added to the church during his pastorate."

In 1864 the church took steps toward the establishment of a Mission in the upper part of the city. A building lot was secured, and eight hundred dollars *cash* paid for the same. While the church was deliberating as to the style of house to be erected, and the time to do it, a complaint was made that the mother church, in the purchase of ground for a Mission Chapel in the vicinity of the State Normal School, was encroaching upon the field of labor properly under the cultivation of the "Central Baptist Church." The pastor of that church had an interview with the pastor of the First church, proposing that if such an enterprise was established, his people, and not the First church, should be allowed to do the work, unless we were willing that they should unite with us. Having taken the lead in this Mission enterprise, secured the lot, and held it *free from debt*, this proposal somewhat interfered with our plans, and certainly came too late to secure co-operation in the work thus nobly inaugurated on the part of the First church. A conference was had between a committee from each church, which resulted in a proposal to take our lots and erect a building thereon, if we would consent to such a course, and leave that field to the "Central Church." This proposal was duly considered at a "regular Church meeting," when, on motion of Deacon William Johnson, for "peace sake" and the "interests of the cause," it was voted to "let the Central Baptist Church have the lots of ground

secured for Mission purposes." That church, we are happy to say, has succeeded in the establishment of a Mission Chapel in the vicinity of the lots purchased by us for such a purpose, the result, doubtless, of the noble effort on your part to "enlarge your borders."

On yielding the field of missionary effort up-town, attention was directed to Chambersburg and to the south part of the Sixth Ward, as promising large returns to such efforts. After carefully considering the subject with several persons, deeply imbued with the idea of Mission School work, it was deemed advisable to afford all the aid possible to the "Sixth Ward" enterprise, and to make the Sunday School already established there the nucleus of a Mission Chapel organization, hoping that the way would soon open for a mission school in Chambersburg. W. I. Vannest, Esq., has tendered building lots for such a purpose. Deacon W. M. Lenox, the Superintendent of the Sixth Ward Sunday School, has given ground for a similar purpose, where the work has been already commenced, and where, soon, we hope to see a Baptist Chapel made glorious in its history, as it shall be said, "this and that man was born there."

We have connected with this church "A Young Men's Mission Association," composed of most of the young men of the church. They labor to build up the Sunday School, to visit the sick, the poor, to distribute tracts. They also maintain *five* meetings, every Tuesday evening, in different portions of the city. A noble band of laborers, they shall have their reward. The Trustees of this Church have generously appropriated a room in the Chapel building for the sole use and occupancy of the "Association," which the young men have tastefully and appropriately furnished. Let

me bespeak the sympathy, the aid, and the prayers of all the Church for the "Young Men's Mission Association."

During the early part of the present pastorate a Society was formed, styled "The Ladies' Society and Sociable,"—the real object of which was the elevation of the style and standard of music in the church service, a reform greatly needed. To this end an organ was desirable, and to this work the ladies gave their best energies, aided nobly by most of the men of the church and congregation. They were successful, and in due time the beautiful organ now adorning your house of worship was placed in its niche, free from debt—an offering generous and noble for the service of the sanctuary. The improvement in this department is most apparent, and the choir, swelling out the songs of Zion from sabbath to sabbath, well deserves the praise of the whole church. The management of the organ and organist is under the direction of a committee composed of Messrs. Joshua S. Day, W. I. Vannest and J. V. Hutchinson; the management of the choir, in the employment of a chorister, and all appertaining thereto, is by vote of the church, in charge of Deacon D. B. Coleman, Isaac Gearhart and Deacon W. M. Lenox.

Your church debt has been reduced about one-half, and *now* you owe only about four thousand dollars. Your graveyard, which was in a most deplorable condition, and which is yet susceptible of great improvement, during the last year or two has been adorned by the planting of one hundred and fifty-nine dollars worth of trees and shrubs. Five hundred dollars have been paid over by the "Ladies' Society" toward the erection of an iron fence in front of the church property. Last year, in *church meeting*, a vote was passed to paint and renovate this edifice, which has, in part, been done; *you* have

yet to make provision for its payment, a *vote*, however, and a *provision* which ought to have been taken and made only by the Trustees. The spiritual body attending solely and exclusively to spiritual affairs, while the corporate body having in possession and control the property, should be allowed, *unembarrassed* by church action, to devise ways and means to keep in repair and to carry forward all that pertains to the secular interests of the same.

It is worthy of record that during the present summer a Mission work, in behalf of the German population of our city, has been inaugurated. This work originated with the "Central Church," but is cordially endorsed by the First Church, an efficient committee having been appointed to co-operate with a similar committee from the other church. The Rev. Mr. Hasselhune, of the German Church of Newark, N. J., has already preached in this city under the auspices of the joint committee. The prospect of success is cheering.

During the progress of our denomination in this city there have been twenty-one settled preachers: *nine* with the up-town interest and *twelve* with the First Church. The time occupied by those serving *this* church, and the baptisms of each during their pastorate, will be found in the following table:—

Peter Wilson,.....	3 years and 10 months.	Baptized 18
William Boswell,.....	13 " 9 "	" 187
George Patterson,.....	2 " 2 "	" 41
Morgan J. Rhees,.....	10 " 7 "	" 231
Luther F. Beecher,.....	1 " .. "	" 49
John Young,.....	" 6 "	" 27
Levi G. Beck,.....	4 " 9 "	" 46
Henry K. Green,.....	3 " .. "	" 50
Duncan Dunbar,.....	1 " 6 "	" 13
Lewis Smith,.....	3 " .. "	" 49
O. T. Walker,.....	4 " 10 "	" 227
D. Henry Miller,.....	3 " 9 "	" 242
Different Supplies,.....	7 " 5½ "	" 9

Embracing sixty-four years and eight and a half months; the total number of baptisms being *eleven hundred and eighty-nine*. The present membership of the church, October 6th, 1867, being seven hundred and eleven.

In 1844, David Brister, James Howell, William Johnson, and Daniel B. Coleman were elected Deacons; David Brister being re-elected after his return to the church, his first election dating January, 1831.

The following named persons have served the church in the important office of Clerk, and in the following order:— Benjamin Coles, from the constitution of the church until 1808; Thomas McKean one year; William Gould one year; Thomas McKean two years; James Belden one year; Daniel Lake two years; Thomas McKean from October, 1814, to July, 1816; when Gershom Mott was elected, who served most faithfully and ably for *thirty-three* years. At his death a series of resolutions were adopted, expressive of the high esteem in which the church held his services, and of confidence in his christian character. Mr. Mott's death was a great bereavement to the church, and also a long-felt loss in the community at large. Abram R. Harris was appointed to the office next. He served a few months only, when John Q. Carman was chosen. He served from 1849 until March, 1853, when the present efficient and faithful officer, Daniel B. Coleman, was elected.

The Board of Trustees have been changed from time to time since the first election, as vacancies occurred, by removals, resignations, or death. The present Board consists of William Johnson, Samuel Wooley, Abram R. Harris, James Howell, W. W. Mershon, Joshua S. Day, and William Whitehead.

The present officers serving the church as Deacons are William Johnson, James Howell, D. B. Coleman, W. M. Lenox, Enos Bowne and W. W. Mershon; the last three were elected in December, 1863. The venerable George Lanning, after serving the church as Deacon for forty-five years, "fell asleep in Jesus" October 7th, 1866. One year ago this present week we laid his body in the dust, on the south side of this Church edifice. May the surviving Deacons be as faithful and true to all her interests as was "Father Lanning."

The Treasurers of the Church have been as follows:—Robert Howell from 1805 to 1812; Ezekiel Dye from 1812 to 1816; William McKean to 1819; Peter Jackson to 1823; David Brister to 1843; Daniel B. Coleman then served for seven years. He resigned, when the present excellent Treasurer, A. R. Harris, was appointed. Just at this point it is worthy of mention, and to be repeated "to the generations following," that the Collector and Treasurer never have suffered the Pastor to remain a day without his salary, when it was due. All honor to these men. If the money is not in the treasury, they provide the means; but the pastor is not allowed to wait for his money.

I cannot refrain from introducing an item of history which was productive of the gratifying fact to which I have just referred. The church, until the pastorate of Rev. Lewis Smith, had but little system in the management of its finances; this was especially true in the collection of "pew rents," which materially affected the payment promptly of the pastor's salary. The pious, devoted Smith, had waited weeks for his money, but he waited in vain. He felt that the laborer was "worthy of his hire." His patience and forbearance both being exhausted, he addressed the following note to the Deacons and Treasurer:—

“ MARCH 23d, 1857.

“ *Dear Brethren* :—This is to inform you with all kindness that there will be no services performed by me in the church next sabbath, unless the salary now due me is paid before that time.

“ I take this opportunity to say further, that hereafter, if the salary is not paid within two weeks after it is due, my services will cease till such time as it is paid.

“ Hoping that you will have no further trouble in understanding my intentions in regard to this matter,

“ I am, truly yours,

“ LEWIS SMITH.”

This letter had the desired effect. Mr. Smith was paid up before “ the next sabbath,” and from that time the practice of paying the pastor’s salary when due has been most sacredly and conscientiously observed. The successors of Smith have been blest in his deed.

It will not be out of place here to make mention of a few persons connected with the early history of this church, who subsequently became preachers of the Gospel. Benjamin Coles, the first Clerk of the Church, who was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1807, was dismissed, by letter, to the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, about the year 1810. He was a man much esteemed, of considerable natural ability as a thinker, but unable readily to express his thoughts, he was not generally acceptable as a preacher. He taught school for many years. He died about the year 1845.

Joshua P. Slack was baptized and joined the church in 1810, and was dismissed to unite with the Sansom Street Church, Philadelphia, in October, 1815. By that church he was licensed to preach. He was settled as Pastor of the Lower Dublin Church, Pennsylvania, where he was ordained.

He was quite successful in his work, but was suddenly removed by death, after preaching little more than a year.

James B. Bowen, mentioned in Dr. Hall's history of the Sunday School enterprise of Trenton, was baptized in July, 1815, and remained connected with the church until January, 1825, when he united with the church at Lambertville, N. J. When he united with this church he was about seventeen years of age. He was beloved for his piety, and admired for his gifts in prayer and exhortation. The church at Lambertville licensed and ordained him to the work of the ministry. He became pastor of the church at South Hampton, Pa., where he remained several years. He then removed to Virginia. When last heard from, he was, with a ripened experience, still "holding forth the word of life."

This church, in its early history, gave evidence of great Missionary zeal. As early as October, 1810, a "prayer meeting was established for the spread of the Gospel;" a special meeting was to be held *quarterly*, the first of which occurred January, 1811. This was three years before the *Baptist Board of Foreign Missions* was formed. When the "New Jersey Baptist State Convention" was organized, this church was one of the constituent members, and gave liberally of its funds for the missionary objects of the Convention. This feeling of interest continued until, owing to the action of some of the officers of the Convention, the church felt herself and counsel disregarded, where of all others she should have been respected. Most of those who were active in the affair referred to, on both sides, have *passed away*; soon the *last one* will lie down in death. May we not hope that the past will be forgotten in its bitter history, and this church, true to herself, shall forgive all, and, as the evidence

thereof, lay largely and freely on the altar of her wealth for State Convention uses?

This history would be incomplete did we fail to make mention of the Sunday School. At the beginning it was the child of the church. The church gave it birth; the church gave it culture and growth; church officers watched over its interests; and as evidence of the care the church and pastor had of the Sunday School the children were taken in a body to the House of God, to participate in the services, the teachers sitting with the scholars, the pastor frequently catechizing the school. I regret to say the day has come when there may be found those who seek to wrest the Sunday School from its true relationship to the church, and its general supervision from the pastor. May this church rise up, in honor to the memory of the founders of her Sunday School, to rebuke such a spirit, if ever publicly manifested. William Gillingham was the first Superintendent of the School; John T. French the first Secretary. In 1847 the School had on the roll one hundred scholars—thirty-five male and sixty-five female—ten female teachers and four male. Five hundred volumes in the Library. Eliza Ann Sherrad was the Treasurer, and Sarah B. Mott Librarian. Now, 1867, we number seven hundred scholars, sixty-five teachers, sixteen hundred volumes in the Library. W. W. Mershon and James Butterworth, Superintendents; Isaac Gearhart, Librarian; Lewis Wooley, E. Case and E. Knowles, Assistants; Annie Southwick, Treasurer. We rejoice in our prosperity, yet cry “not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord, be all the glory.” Our Sunday School singing is not excelled, if indeed equalled, in the State. If our Superintendents deserve special praise, it is because of their devotion to the interests of the School.

in this department. Miss Angie Brackett, nobly aided by several young ladies, has charge of the "Infant School," a department of growing interest and importance to the church.

In 1839 a Library Association was formed in the church, for the benefit of the members, and also "that the pastor of the church might be supplied with books which he might not himself possess." Fifty-five volumes were collected together. Perhaps these books might with advantage be given to the "Young Men's Mission Association," as the nucleus of a library for their use.

During the early summer of the present year (1867,) the church licensed, to preach the Gospel, Brethren Geo. Parker and George W. Nicholson. Mr. Nicholson was a convert from Methodism to the doctrines and ordinances of the Baptist church. He had preached successfully within the bounds of the "New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church." He was called to ordination by this church, and set apart by the laying on of "the hands of the Presbytery," August 29th, 1867. Rev. J. F. Brown, D. D., Chancellor of the University of Lewisburg, preached the ordination sermon.

And now, beloved flock, I must close this discourse. I have omitted many incidents I could have named, but enough has been said to show that the history of this church has been most eventful; full of trial, of care, and unceasing toil. In all the Great Head of the Church has ever showed His *care* and *watch* over you. Through two fiery trials HE led you; from "a little one" you have become "a thousand;" from retirement you have been led out into "a large place;" from a plain and unpretending house of worship you were removed to a larger and more pleasing one, and then, in due time, to this spacious, this elegant edifice, where you have learned the truth that "*God will indeed dwell on the earth.*"

This hurried review of your history cannot fail, we think, to awaken in your hearts the spirit of praise. Lift up, then, to-day, your song of thanksgiving for the way you have been led; for the *faithful* men you have had to guide you, some of the brightest lights in our ministry, already entered upon their REST. Praise God for the large measure of revival influences which have marked your history. Gather up these fragments of experience, and let them compose a memorial which shall be to you as the "stone" which Samuel took and set "between Mizpeh and Shen," which he called "EBENEZER, saying: Hitherto had the Lord helped us." Praise Him for the sacred memories of devoted christians, men and women, who toiled early and late, who deemed nothing in their power to bestow too great a sacrifice for the church of their choice. Of such were the Parkers, the Sunderlands, the Wellings, the Mulls, the Johnsons, Richard and Martha Howell, and scores of others to memory dear, of whom we speak joyfully, "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, their works do follow them." Go without these walls, look you upon the graves of your dead now crowding "the yard," and who is there remaining of the older families but would be heard to declare, "my father, my mother, my husband, my wife, my brother, my sister, my son, the hope of my life, my daughter, the angel of my heart, lies there." Praise God to-day for the memory of your dead; praise Him in the hope of immortality and eternal life. Praise God in the full consecration of your powers to perpetuate the good name of this dear old church, and thus to embalm the life thoughts and deeds, of your loved departed.

In view of God's goodness, arise, my brethren, and, as a thank-offering to your father's God, "enlarge the place of

thy tent, stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations, spare not, lengthen thy cords, strengthen thy stakes." Go forth, and in view of enlargement to the kingdom of Christ—in view of christian effort and christian success, in the blessed work of winning souls to Christ, plant another church, build another pulpit, erect another altar, and as you cry, "behold the Lamb," add, in the assurance of faith, "in the name of the Lord our God do we set up our banners." Have faith to this end. Give willingly, heartily, generously, give in sacrifice to this work. Who of you professing so much love for Jesus will take the lead in this enterprise of enlargement; who, who dare refuse such a memorial of affection to the memory of the loved departed; and who dare refuse it, as an offering of gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings vouchsafed unto us as a people? This work I hope to see accomplished. It has been the desire of my heart for years. To you, my children in the gospel of Christ, I look for its full achievement. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," ever remembering that "there is a withholding that tendeth to poverty."

With this day's labor I close my pastorate with you, beloved flock; how soon to meet on the other side of death's river we cannot tell; but when the world's history shall be completed, and eternal justice speak our biography in the opening of "the book of remembrance," may our names be found in the Lamb's Book of Life, the purchase of blood,—blood precious in the sight of Heaven. To this end, "hold fast the form of sound words." Hold up the Cross of Christ. Stand fast and firm to the Church, and let every act and every word speak out—

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode :
The Church, our blest Redeemer saved,
With his own precious blood."

"Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death."

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